I am always delighted when I come across a media article that openly or inadvertently promotes the Montessori philosophy. Many such articles have been included in my blog https://jenniferdaveysedblog.blogspot.com. I recently came across an article in the Wall Street Journal by Jennifer Breheny Wallace titled, “Chores and Children.”

Several of our parents have told me that they would like a parent education session on “Montessori in the home.” Well, that session can begin right here, for chores are where Montessori begins in the home!

Marie Montessori observed that chores at an early age helped children build motor skills while learning responsibility and self-reliance. Today’s science confirms this. In 2002, Marty Rossmann, professor emeritus at the University of Minnesota, analyzed data from a longitudinal study that followed 84 children across four periods in their lives—in preschool, around ages 10 and 15, and in their mid-20s. Rossmann’s research showed that young adults who began chores at ages 3 and 4 were more likely to have good relationships with family and friends, to achieve academic and early career success and to be self-sufficient, as compared with those who didn’t have chores or who started them as teens.

Not being taught the skills of everyday living can limit children’s ability to function at age appropriate levels: for example a 5-year-old child going to school and not being able to put on and button her coat, a 7-year-old child at a friend’s house does not
Why children need chores (continued from page 1)

know how to pour juice for himself. Fast forward to 18-year-old who goes to college not knowing how to do his or her own laundry? By expecting children to complete self-care tasks and to help with household chores, parents equip children with the skills to function independently in the outside world.

“Young adults who began chores at ages 3 and 4 were more likely to have good relationships with family and friends, to achieve academic and early career success and to be self-sufficient, as compared with those who didn’t have chores or who started them as teens.” (Rossmann, 2002)

Richard Rende, a developmental psychologist and author of “Raising Can-Do-Kids “that parents today want their children spending time on things that can bring proven success, but ironically we’ve stopped doing the one thing that’s actually been a proven dictator of success. Letting children off the hook for chores because they have too much homework or need to practice a sport sends the message that academic or athletic skills are more important than caring about themselves and others. Decades of studies show the benefit of chores to be academic, emotional and even professional.

Here are some of the best ways to keep your children properly motivated to do chores:

- **Make chores a regular part of the family routine.** Write them into the calendar, to maintain consistency—it is expected that everyone over the age of 3 will be responsible for certain tasks to keep the household functioning.

- **Involve children in choosing the tasks.** It makes them more likely to “buy in” and do their assigned task.

- **Assign chores that focus on both taking care of the family as well as self-care.** For example, dusting the living room or emptying the dishwasher might be coupled with tidying one’s bedroom, or doing personal laundry. Remind children that chores are not merely “a duty” but “a way of taking care of each other.”

- **Consider how you look at “chores.”** You are your child’s most important role model. Show that responsibilities are met with grace and acceptance not resentment and anger.

- **Keep allowances and chores separate.** (See our May Newsletter story, “Helping Children Learn About Money.”) Research suggests that external rewards can lower intrinsic motivation and performance. Chores need to be an altruistic act not a business transaction.

Children may not thank you in the short term for giving them chores. This is a case where the goal is not necessarily to make your children happy; rather it is to teach them life skills and a sense of responsibility that will last a lifetime.

Join us for class potluck picnics

Get to know the families in your class by joining us for the class potluck picnics. The schedule is as follows:

- **Weds., Sept 2 – Primary 1**
  - Ms. Kristin, Ms. Ceci
- **Thurs., Sept 3 – Toddlers**
- **Tues., Sept 8 – Primary 2**
  - Ms. Norma & Ms. Bea
- **Weds., Sept 9 – Lower & Upper Elementary**
- **Thurs., Sept 10 – Primary 3**
  - Ms. Jenny & Ms. Monika

Bring your favorite dish to share. All potluck dinners will be held from 5:30 – 7:00 p.m.
Survey Results

What brought you here keeps you here!

Most important factors that lead you to SPEMS:

- School’s ability to meet the needs of the child
- Effective teachers and administration
- The environment/atmosphere of the school
- Challenge of the academic program

The survey showed a high rate of satisfaction with St. Paul’s on all these factors, but most highly rated were the following:

- The opportunity for self-directed learning
- The environment/atmosphere of the school
- The school’s ability to meet the needs of the child
- The opportunity for children to learn from each other

Thank you to all the parents who took time to complete the survey. You have provided vital information that the school board and staff can use as they plan for the coming school year and for the future school years.

Fall down 7 times; Get up 8: Teaching Kids to Succeed

Start the year right by putting this free event on your calendar: St. Paul’s parents are invited to attend “Fall Down 7 Times, Get up 8: Teaching Kids to Succeed,” a humorous look at parenting by noted author Debbie Silver on Thursday, Aug. 13. The seminar will be held from 1-3 p.m. at St. George Episcopal School, 6900 West Avenue in San Antonio. Please RSVP by emailing mzeigler@saintgeorgeschool.org

‘Little Chapel’ to be transformed as new home for Catechesis of the Good Shepherd

The “little” chapel in the main building is being redesigned as a Catechesis of the Good Shepherd Atrium. The small pews have been removed and the beautiful materials of the atrium have been assembled. Primary and Toddler students will visit the atrium in small groups throughout the year.

The Catechesis of the Good Shepherd is an approach to the religious formation of children. It is rooted in the Bible, the liturgy of the church, and the educational principles of Maria Montessori. The atrium is a place for religious life, for community and worship—not a classroom for instruction. It is a place of meaningful work through which the child can come to know God.

In the atrium the child can ponder a biblical passage or a prayer from the liturgy by taking the material for that text and working with it - placing wood figures of sheep in a sheepfold of the Good Shepherd, setting sculpted apostles around a Last Supper table, or preparing a small altar with the furnishings used for the Eucharist.

"Though you have hidden these things from the wise and the learned, you have revealed them to the childlike."

--Matthew 11:25

If you would like more information on the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd, check out http://www.cgsusa.org or call Jennifer Davey for a tour of the atrium.
Want to better understand Montessori? Sign up for our Journey & Discovery event

For most of us, the Montessori classroom is very different from our own educational experience and naturally prompts lots of questions. Our Journey & Discovery event on Saturday, Sept. 19 from 9:00 a.m. to noon is your opportunity to get answers.

This half-day seminar offers a comprehensive look at Montessori education theory and practice from toddlers to elementary. The day starts with a journey through classrooms spanning the entire Montessori curriculum from Toddlers to 12 years. Parents will then split into the group of their choice to fully discover the curriculum for Toddlers to 6th grade. This second half will include hands-on learning and an opportunity to talk with teachers at all levels about what happens in the classroom each day.

Journey & Discovery is a comprehensive parent-focused event. Our goal is to help you understand Montessori education the best way possible—by immersing yourself in it for a morning. Childcare will be provided, but space is limited so make sure to sign up early.

Parent welcome meeting Aug. 21

A parent welcome meeting will be held Friday, August 21 @ 6:00 p.m. in the Parish Hall.

Come and meet our teachers and get caught up on school news!

The Lamplighter

Art, soccer, singing and water-play at St. Paul’s summer camp!